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*The Alexander Letters, 1787-1900.* (Savannah: privately printed for George J. Baldwin. 1910. Pp. 387.)

IN the early decades of American independence middle Georgia was a land of rich opportunity, with industrial conditions rapidly changing from frontier to plantation type and a heterogeneous population as rapidly developing an orderly and dignified social regime. In January, 1787, Sarah Porter Hillhouse, a bride who had just accompanied her husband, a New-Englander like herself, to his new home at Washington, Georgia, wrote to her father describing conditions around her:

"There are a few, and a very few, Worthy good people in the Country, near us, but the people in general are the most prophane, blasphemous set of people I ever heard of. They make it a steady practice (if they have money) to come to town every day if possible, and as Mr. Hillhouse is the only person that keeps Liquors, we have the whole throng around us, as many as fifty at a time, take one day with another, and sometimes when any public business is done, which is often, fourteen or sixteen hundred standing so thick that they look like a flock of Black-birds, and perhaps not one in fifty but what we call fighting drunk. . . . They have spent in our cellar for liquor in one day Thirty Pounds Stg., and not a drop carried 1 rod from the store, but sit on a log and swallow it as quick as possible."

The letter from which this extract is taken is the first appearing (pp. 16, 17) in the volume of the *Alexander Letters*. It was written by the great-grandmother of the ten Alexander brothers and sisters of the Civil War generation (born 1824-1848) who wrote the bulk of the remaining letters contained in the volume. If letters of the same period were extant from the other ancestors of the Alexander group they must have been written from homes severally in Virginia, Germany, and Scotland. The Alexanders are thus typical of the cosmopolitan origin of the Georgia settlers, as well as of the prevailing tendency to early marriages and large families (except in the too frequent instances of death in early maturity). The Alexanders and the letters they wrote are illustrative likewise of the combined gentleness and vigor of the social upper class. As Sarah Hillhouse's letter gives a glimpse of rough early conditions, so those of her great-grandchildren contain a quantity of unconscious data upon the life of the plantation gentry as well as upon wartime conditions. The book is full of the intimate, sincere family-talk of unpretentious gentle folk. Numerous pen-pictures occur, as of the giddy city life of Savannah in the flush times of 1818, of Saratoga Springs in 1841, of a rustic watering-place in western Georgia in 1846, of the dead town of Sunbury on the Georgia coast in 1853, of affectionate negroes (pp. 168, 177, 221-223), of the wedding of Robert Toombs's daughter to one of the Alexander brothers in 1853, of military life at West Point on the eve of the war, and of the battles of Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. All of these latter are from the pen of the late General E. P. Alexander, who was Longstreet's chief of artillery at Gettysburg

and the most distinguished member of this generally talented Alexander family. This descriptive material cannot be quoted in a review; but the vivid battle-dispatches (pp. 254-256) demand reprinting. They were all written at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, within the two hours preceding Pickett's charge.

*1. Longstreet to Alexander, about noon.*

"Colonel. If the Artillery fire does not have the effect to drive off the enemy or greatly demoralize him, so as to make our effort pretty certain, I would prefer that you should not advise Gen. Pickett to make the charge. I shall rely a great deal upon your good judgment to determine the matter, and shall expect you to let Gen. Pickett know when the moment offers."

*2. Alexander to Longstreet, in reply to the above.*

"General. I will only be able to judge of the effect of our fire on the enemy by his return fire as his infantry is but little exposed to view, and the smoke will obscure the field. If, as I infer from your note, there is any alternative to this attack, it should be carefully considered before opening our fire, for it will take all the Arty ammunition we have left to test this one thoroughly and if result is unfavourable we will have none left for another effort and even if this is entirely successful it can only be so at a very bloody cost."

*3. Longstreet to Alexander, about 12:30 P. M.*

"Colonel. The intention is to advance the Inf: if the Arty has the desired effect of driving the enemy off, or, having other effect such as to warrant us in making the attack. When that moment arrives advise Gen. P. and of course advance such artillery as you can use in aiding the attack."

*4. Alexander to Longstreet, about 12:40 P. M.*

"General when our Arty fire is at its best, I will advise Gen Pickett to advance."

*5. Alexander to Pickett, 1:25 P. M.*

"General. If you are to advance at all, you must come at once, or we will not be able to support you as we ought. But the enemy's fire has not slackened materially, and there are 18 guns firing from the cemetery."

*6. Alexander to Pickett, 1:40 P. M.*

"To Genl Pickett. The 18 guns have been driven off. For God's sake come on quick or we cannot support you. Ammunition nearly out."

The volume contains very little contemporary description of actual plantation economy, for it was too familiar to call for description in family correspondence. To supply this lack in part Mrs. Cumming and Mrs. Hull, two of the six Alexander sisters, wrote in 1908 bits of their recollections; and these, which are scattered through the book, are among the most faithful plantation sketches in print.

The collection and editing of the documents by Miss Marion Boggs has been excellently done, as also the preparation by Mrs. George J. Baldwin of the genealogical material at the end of the volume. The

book has been handsomely printed by Mr. Baldwin for private distribution, in an edition limited to 131 copies. It is to be regretted that its accessibility is thus restricted; but those responsible for its production merit cordial thanks for the preservation and the circulation even though limited of the documents.

ULRICH B. PHILLIPS.

*Lincoln and Herndon.* By JOSEPH FORT NEWTON. (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press. 1910. Pp. 367.)

WITH the initial sentiment expressed in the preface of this book everyone will agree: "whoso sends forth another Lincoln book must show cause why it should be read". Not everyone, however, will share the author's conviction that the present volume justifies its own existence by virtue of the new material which it contains, for while it throws considerable light upon the life and habits of the junior member of the law firm of Lincoln and Herndon, it fails to reveal any other Lincoln than the one whom Herndon delineated in his biography. It is somewhat regrettable that the author has allowed himself to be swerved from his original purpose, which was to portray Herndon as the friend, partner, and biographer of Lincoln, and has borrowed so copiously from other writers to depict Lincoln.

Between the years 1854 and 1859, Herndon maintained a rather one-sided correspondence with Theodore Parker, whose writings he had read with the greatest avidity and whose friendship he coveted earnestly. These letters written by Herndon, fifty-two in number, are printed in this volume for the first time, together with about a dozen letters from Parker. As a revelation of Herndon, they have considerable value, but they yield little or no new information about Lincoln. Herndon mentions his partner only a score of times; and his correspondent alludes to Lincoln but thrice. Many suggestive references to local politics occur in Herndon's letters. One of his fixed ideas, which may have some basis in fact, was his conviction that Greeley was responsible for Lincoln's defeat in the senatorial campaign of 1858. Greeley, Seward, Weed, and Douglas, Herndon insists, met in Chicago in October of 1857 and entered upon an agreement whereby the New Yorkers were to support Douglas for the Senate and Douglas was to throw his influence in favor of Seward as candidate for the presidency in 1860. The replies of Parker to Herndon's outpourings were brief but kindly. There is no evidence that Parker shared Herndon's confidence in his law partner or divined Lincoln's real greatness. Both agreed, however, in cordial detestation of Douglas.

Although Herndon labored indefatigably for Lincoln's political preferment, he does not seem to have shaped appreciably the thinking of the older man on political issues. Indeed, in spite of their intimacy of twenty years in the law office, they lived separate lives. They owned a copy of Helper's *Impending Crisis*—the sensation of the year. Her-